

ATTACHMENT C



DRAFT MINUTES

PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION
6:30 p.m. – Thursday, October 26, 2023

1. Call to Order

The hybrid meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by CHAIR VOISS.

Commissioners Present: Chair Voiss, Vice-Chair Bader, Commissioners Altimore, Esemuede, Krass, and Patterson

Excused Absence: Commissioners Kennedy and Milligan

Staff Present: Stephen Padua, Long Range Planning Manager

2. Public Comments (General)

There were no requests to speak.

3. Regular Business (00:01)

- a) **Comprehensive Plan: Environment Stewardship and Climate Resilience Element, (D)**
Presented by:
Stephen Padua, Long Range Planning Manager

Padua gave the presentation.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked for clarification regarding the role of the city. Padua replied that there is a carry-over from what was adopted to the Climate Action Plan, which addresses aspirational goals with a multi-faceted approach and breaks up local versus regional strategies. COMMISSIONER KRASS stated that the city has no control over energy supply from, in example, Puget Sound Energy (PSE), and that *sustainable energy* as a goal is possibly not achievable. Padua replied that many utilities have climate resilience plans and locally, incentives and regulations can be created for existing properties to examine such as moving away from natural gas, but full control is at the utility.

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COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE asked if there will be Federal dollars to incentivize work. Padua replied that there will be State dollars, prioritizing cities that need to comply first, to support additional analysis. Issaquah does not need to fully comply with HB 11-81 until 2029 and groundwork is being done.

COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE asked if there will be tax credits for developers who use solar panels for new development. Padua replied that incentives can be considered and will continue to be discussed with Sustainability staff. Certain requirements are currently specified in the Municipal code.

COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE asked for clarification regarding the requirement for LEED certification. Padua replied that a full list can be brought back to the Commission. COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE asked for clarification regarding LEED Gold and Silver. Padua replied that currently, new buildings of a specific size must meet LEED Gold certification, and that the full requirement will be brought back.

VICE-CHAIR BADER stated that there are some policies written as specific goals, and while the level of specificity is good, the specificity does not exist in other elements. Padua replied that a high level of detail is provided in this element to ensure that there is consistency with the Climate Action Plan, covering a wide range of sustainability and stewardship. VICE-CHAIR BADER stated that the words *Environmental Justice* are not in the policy, and that a mobility policy had been removed from the Element. Padua replied that what has been removed is addressed in other Elements and not required to be addressed in this policy, overlap that is being fixed with the periodic update. Padua replied that *Environmental Justice* will be included in the narrative for the Element but not in specific policies. VICE-CHAIR BADER stated that a new policy, page 13 under LU-K3, reads in the past tense and the words *current and future research* could be added.

CHAIR VOISS asked for clarification regarding a *frontline community*. Padua replied that historically, less expensive housing is found closer to freeways, but that there is a higher impact from air pollution in those communities, a pattern of disproportionate impact. Outreach, funding mechanisms, or regulation changes are being considered.

COMMISSIONER PATTERSON stated that in T Policy B-1, the acronym S.O.V. (Single Occupant Vehicle) may not be understood, needing more clarification. COMMISSIONER PATTERSON asked why Policy LU-H1 has become very granular, and Padua replied that specific neighborhoods, Central Issaquah, Issaquah Highlands, and Old Town, are called out because these are where a higher density of commercial and retail land uses are located. COMMISSIONER PATTERSON asked if there is a reason to maintain broadness and Padua replied that levels of density will not reach the need for mass transit in certain areas.

COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE asked if there will be another Comprehensive Plan amendment before Light Rail arrives. Padua replied yes, a major periodic update will occur in 2034.

CHAIR VOISS asked if a goal is for the city to lead by example in regionally or within Issaquah only, LU-F3. Padua replied the City of Issaquah.

CHAIR VOISS asked for clarification regarding the mention of natural gas, energy, and electricity in LU-G1. Padua replied the Policy is regarding efficiency improvements.

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COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE asked if efficiency comes under LEED or Evergreen standards. Padua replied yes, but that there are other incentives in terms of use of facilities. COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE asked if these would fall under Sustainability and Padua replied yes.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if efficiency should be regulated if someone creates electricity for themselves, off the city grid, and that the word *efficiency* could be preceded with *grid*. Padua replied that self-efficiency also improves the lifespan of many utilities, feeding into decarbonization. Efficiency by those off the grid will still affect appliances, materials, and the carbon footprint, a lifestyle conversation. COMMISSIONER KRASS stated that programs could incentivize the project to move faster. CHAIR VOISS stated that the Issaquah Climate Action Plan (ICAP) has incentives for home builders and Padua replied yes, with some guidance in the Comprehensive Plan.

COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE stated that there will be time before the grid is moved away from, particularly by emergency services, but that clarity regarding cleaner energy sources will be helpful, pushing efficiency. Padua replied that the ICAP does provide more clarity and asked the Commission if the clarity is a better fit in the ICAP or this policy. COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE asked for clarification that clarity is in the Functional Plan, and Padua replied yes. COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE stated that while natural gas use will decrease, electricity will increase.

COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE stated that gains achieved from new construction will be larger than from small incremental changes, not in goals but included in the Implementation Plan. Padua replied yes.

COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE stated that existing assets and infrastructure need to be renewed over time, and funding will need to be attached.

COMMISSIONER KRASS stated that there are two competing goals, to reduce electricity while planning for more Electrical Vehicles.

COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE stated that natural gas use should be reduced while improving the efficiency of electricity, the source of electricity cleaner. Padua replied yes, and that the policy is specific to efficiency of use within buildings rather than the system-wide grid.

CHAIR VOISS asked if there is a cost benefit analysis being worked on for when the city retrofits. Padua replied yes, and that facility assessments are being done for all city buildings. The old City Hall use was reduced due to the pandemic and an assessment is being conducted regarding the need for the building now, and the age of the building requires many retrofits if to be used going forward.

COMMISSIONER PATTERSON asked where earthquakes are addressed, not climate related but natural disasters. Padua replied that in the Comprehensive Plan, calling out specific strategies for various natural disasters is being moved away from; these are addressed in the Issaquah Emergency Management Plan and part of a more coordinated effort with the regional Emergency Management Plan. Wildfires, for example, require more regional coordination than local. Broad impact needs to be addressed regionally.

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VICE-CHAIR BADER stated that if new buildings are being prioritized, the impact will continue to grow due to cost and quality of older housing. Padua replied that the risks are being examined, and that the market will control what occurs. The city can look at strategies to address obtaining more affordable housing.

Padua asked the Commission if there are further strategies to consider on either the jobs or housing sides. COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE stated that technology is not at a point where higher efficiency is affordable, and as many incentives and not only requirements as can be brought all around will be critical. Payback will be decades in the future. Ultimately a building is healthier, but not affordable to achieve.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if the scope of additional cost has been examined to then find other programs to offset the cost, in dollars, parking, or impervious surfaces, and more for homeowners.

COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE stated that efficiencies or energy advancements will be more expensive in the short-term, but there will be a long-term return on investment. Funding to support costs will need to be in place. An additional strategy can be a requirement for affordable housing to be built within a development. CHAIR VOISS asked Padua for clarification. Padua replied that the Comprehensive Plan remains high-level and aspirational and the how will be part of the Work Plan in 2024.

COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE stated that there is nothing on the list that would be counter to more affordable housing. Padua replied that the how is built into regulations.

COMMISSIONER KRASS stated that there will always be conflicting goals between growth and safety, environment, but the how and prioritization are where implementation occurs. Padua stated agreement, and that staffing levels, available funds are additional considerations.

COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE stated that the time for compromise is over, and that changes must be made. Community education will be helpful in an Action Plan.

Padua asked for potential conflicts found in the policy, either now or via email. COMMISSIONER KRASS stated that another pass over the policy with the context of potential conflict can be done. Padua replied that regarding what is achievable, staff works with the Environmental Board to work through implementation, particularly of the Climate Action Plan. When there are tasks related to code, the tasks are brought to the Planning Policy Commission. Achievability depends on the topic, timeline, and resources.

VICE-CHAIR BADER stated that the question of potential conflict could be difficult. Padua replied that in staff review, conflicts are attempted to be resolved before being brought to the Commissions, but if there is something questionable, this is posed as a Policy question. The Climate Action Plan is being implemented now. VICE-CHAIR BADER stated having difficulty naming goals and Policies without a vision. Padua replied that the vision, not included in the staff memo, is from the Climate Action Plan.

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CHAIR VOISS stated that there are redundancies, but that the staff has done a very good job.

VICE-CHAIR BADER asked if King County has similar Element policies. Padua replied yes, but not as much as within Housing.

4. Reports (00:53)

a) **Council Update**

Presented by:

Stephen Padua, Long Range Planning Manager

Padua stated that there were no new updates.

5. Other Business/Announcements

a) **Upcoming Schedule**

Padua stated that the next meeting will be November 9, 2023 to review the Capital Transportation Utilities Element. The Senior Transportation Planner will be present. There will be a joint meeting as guests of the Economic Vitality Commission on November 15, 2023, location to be determined, the main topic being the Pioneer Project Program.

6. Adjournment

With no further business to conduct, CHAIR VOISS adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Garza, LLC
Recording Secretary